

**Telephone interview with former POW, LT Murray Glusman, MC, USNR. Conducted by Jan K. Herman, Historian, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, 1 Nov, 27 Nov, 4 Dec, 11 Dec, 18 Dec 1995, 16 Jan 1996. (1914-2005)**

**You are a native New Yorker?**

I was born in New York City and grew up in Manhattan. I went to NYU and got my BS in 1934 and my MD in 1938. At the time I got my degree, things began to look difficult in Europe. In 1940 I was an assistant resident in neurology on what is now Roosevelt Island in the middle of the East River. That was about the time they started the draft. I decided to pick my branch of the service and so I joined the Naval reserve at the end of 1940.

Interestingly enough, we had living accommodations at the hospital and I used to see PT boats from the Brooklyn Navy Yard going up and down the river. I mention that only because I got to know that squadron. That was the bunch that got out to the Philippines.

**That was John Bulkeley's squadron.**

Yes. And his exec was Bob Kelly, whom I got to know quite well. I used to go bowling with those guys out in the Philippines. Anyway, I was a bit puzzled as to what these speedboats were doing going up and down the East River.

The interesting thing about my joining the Naval reserve had to do with John Bookman. He joined the reserve just 2 weeks before I did so he was senior to me.

**Did you know Dr. Bookman before he joined the reserves?**

No, I didn't. He went to NYU in the class of '39. I didn't know him until I got called up to active duty on July 7, '41. I met him at the Brooklyn Naval Hospital. I had just been appointed chief resident in neurology at ? \_\_\_\_\_ Memorial.

We were at the naval hospital for about 3 weeks and then got orders to Cavite. We went aboard the *Garfield* of the President Line at San Francisco. That was a great trip. It took about a month. We stopped in Hawaii, Shanghai, Hong Kong. Although they used to stop in Tokyo, we skipped Japan because things were beginning to get a little hot.

**This would have been in 1941?**

Yes. We finally arrived in Manila in late August or early September. I was assigned to the yard dispensary at Cavite and John was sent directly up to the section base at Mariveles. I met Fred Berley at Cavite.

**He had just arrived there from China.**

Yes. He had a ball in China. I guess everybody did. They were living like kings there. It's not that way anymore. That was part of a vanished era.

When we were at Cavite there was always a background of talk about the possibility of war. About November we knew there was going to be trouble. The senior officers were scrambling to get the hell out of there as fast as they could. [Kenneth] Lohman, one of the senior medical officers wanted out but didn't get out. I think he's mentioned in [Thomas H.] Hayes' book.

Anyway, there was a Marine company that set up around Cavite. They were antiaircraft defense. There was a second lieutenant in charge. We used to see the Marines a lot when they came to the yard dispensary. I remember one day this officer asked me, "Say, Doc, we're going

to have some anti-aircraft practice. Do you want to come?" I said sure. They had machine guns set up in this grassy area and crews manning each gun. A plane flew over towing a target sleeve. The guns would fire at the sleeve. The bullets were painted different colors so they would know which guns hit the sleeve. So if a red bullet hit, you knew it was from the red gun. If a yellow bullet hit, it was a yellow gun and so forth. After a while they asked me if I wanted to give it a try. I said sure and when the plane flew over I fired at the sleeve. Right after, they dropped the sleeve and we went over to see the results. There was only one bullet hole. And it was from my gun. I never touched a machine gun in my life and I was the only one who hit the target. I looked at the sleeve and thought, "I'm really in trouble. These guys are **my** protectors."

Near the beginning of December the PT boys came in. I remember Bulkeley coming in with his face swollen on both sides. After examining him, I suggested that he spend a day in the hospital. He said, "No, he had a secret mission. The secret mission was that the PT boats were being moved to Corregidor where they were running errands."

**Had the war started yet?**

No. Once it started Cavite was gone. So anything that occurred in Cavite occurred before the war started.

Toward the end of November we began making preparations to set up battle dressing stations. Initially Berley and I were supposed to be assigned to a battle dressing station in the yard dispensary, which was a wooden frame building. There was a BOQ above it. Berley, thank God, said no way. He said it didn't make any sense. He wanted to set up in a place that was more secure.

**Didn't he find an old paint locker?**

Yes, beneath the naval brig at the yard. And that was our battle dressing station. After Pearl Harbor, and throughout the war, we never knew how much damage the Navy had sustained there because it was classified information.

**Where were you when you heard the news about Pearl Harbor?**

I was in the BOQ in the early morning just after awakening.

**Were you surprised?**

Yes and no. We expected something to happen. We expected that we would be hit first. Well, we weren't disappointed for very long because the very next day Nichols Field was bombed. And then on the 10th we were bombed. The air raid siren had gone off and we went to our battle dressing station. The Japanese planes went over and Berley was standing near the doorway. He said, "Oh, look at those planes! Oh, I see the bombs." I said, "Get the hell in here!" And then, sure enough, the bombs hit and they wiped out the Navy Yard. It was completely devastated. What wasn't blasted apart burned to the ground.

We had casualties coming in and the space was relatively small and crowded. Berley was working at one of the tables and so was I busy with casualties streaming in. And then a bomb landed on the brig right on top of us. And I thought, "Oh, gee whiz, what a short war because we're all going to get killed!" The whole structure seemed to lift up, shake around a little bit and then settle down again. I thought the overhead was going to collapse and kill everybody in the aid station. But the overhead held. We were very lucky. The lights went out and we worked with battle lanterns doing the best we could taking care of the wounded.

**Were you doing surgery down there or just first aid?**

It amounted to first aid. The structure above us was burning and things began getting hot and the flames drove us out. When we got out the yard was an absolute shambles. I think we lost about 500 people in that bombing and they were mostly civilian yard workers. There really wasn't any place to take cover in the yard so people were mostly exposed.

Marines came over and began loading people onto trucks to take them to the Canacao Naval Hospital, which was untouched. We were also taking people by boat. I remember going to Canacao by boat and on the way I saw a sight that really struck me as extremely odd. A couple of sailors were on a raft with two torpedoes. These guys were perfectly happy. They looked like they were in a different world. This was immediately after the yard had been bombed. I guess they were trying to save the torpedoes. Anyway, that was in the strange sights department.

Anyway, I went over to Canacao and spoke to whoever was in charge. I wanted to know if we were to stay at the yard or whether we should come over to help them. We were told to come Canacao and help out with the casualties who were flooding in. So we went to the hospital and worked there.

The next day I got orders from Hayes to go to Manila and take a bunch of corpsmen with me. Let me say a word about the hospital. I had the impression that the staff was disorganized and didn't know what to do. Eventually they decided to stay put and that meant staying put in Manila. They felt that because they were Medical Corps and noncombatants they would be allowed to take care of their patients. The Japanese wouldn't bother with them but would be busy chasing us at Bataan.

It seemed like a terrible waste. After all, there was a war going on and the troops were on Bataan and these people could have been of use taking care of the troops there.

On the other hand, relations between the Navy and the Army were like relations between the United States Navy and some foreign army. It was like they didn't belong to the same country. We were that far apart. Liaison was very poor between the two groups.

**I understand that when MacArthur declared Manila an open city and the Army left, they marched out, took their patients and put them on a hospital ship and left you all behind. And you were all pretty surprised by that.**

I don't know that they left us behind. It was the decision of those in charge of the naval hospital not to go along.

**And they didn't have orders from higher up to do anything.**

I simply don't know but I think it was their decision to stay.

On the one hand, that decision deprived the troops on Bataan of another hospital and on the other hand, it provided a very useful group for treating the POWs once Bataan and Corregidor fell because they became the hospital unit at Bilibid. And they served a very useful function.

Anyway, they probably didn't have any specific orders and didn't know what the hell to do. Here was a naval group and there was no navy. The ships had left and the yard was gone. It's also true that they didn't show much initiative. The only guy who seemed to have at least some initiative and organizational ability was Hayes but he was not in charge. The senior leadership may have been too old and set in their ways.

**[CAPT Robert] Davis, the CO was close to 50 years old, had been a medical officer for many years, and was used to the peacetime Navy.**

There was kind of a feeling among them not to try anything new. Stay with what you know.

**You weren't part of that group. You were sent off.**

I was not part of the hospital. I was on the staff of the yard dispensary. Berley got shipped out to Bataan and so did I.

**What about Hayes?**

Hayes didn't go with me. He went alone. I was sent out to the section base at Mariveles on Bataan. I was told to collect about six or seven corpsmen, get a truck, and take them to the section base. I got the truck and a driver and we went there. It was a strange experience. When I got to the section base at Mariveles, that was strange too because we arrived during an air raid. There was nobody around. They all had taken cover. There we were looking like a bunch of desperadoes or pirates. We couldn't find anybody to contact. Eventually a lieutenant commander showed up bellowing at the top of his lungs. "What the hell are you guys doing here? I told you to take cover." That was about the stupidest thing I can think of. I think he actually threatened to shoot us if we ever did not take cover during an air raid. I said we didn't know there was an air raid. We had just come from Manila. Finally he simmered down and showed us his beach defense. They had a .50 caliber machine gun pointing out into the harbor. That was their beach defense. And he went over and lovingly patted the machine gun. As he did he accidentally touched the trigger and fired a burst of machine gun bullets out across the water. He was a strange sort.

Anyway, there we were in Mariveles. [PhM2c] Ernie Irvin was with an AA group in a rice paddy. On the other side of the rice paddy and adjoining it was a second paddy with a tent run by [LT] John Nardini. They had a tent there with several beds in it for patients. Nardini was moved out of there and I replaced him. I had that aid station with several corpsmen and we took care of people in the area. This was very near the Mariveles section base and right next to the AA battery. It was a problem. Planes would come over and the AA battery would go banging away at them. I never saw them hit anything, but that battery attracted Japanese attention so they would come in and bomb and strafe it. And that bothered us a bit. Whatever landed off target, we got.

One day several low-flying planes came in strafing. We were in a car driving to the section base. We looked up and there was this rising sun on the wing. We got the hell out of that car really fast but there was no place to take cover. I got into a little creek bed. There was cover from three sides--right, left and behind me. It was open in front of me. I figured, "What the hell, I'm covered on three sides so the gods are with me." But he came at me from the open side. I had this .45 which I couldn't hit a barn door with and I fired at him more out of frustration and rage than anything else.

I was at the section base for awhile and then came down with malaria and was sent to a Army field hospital and it was awful. There were starvation rations and they didn't give me any quinine until I had a few chills which were awful, just terrible. And finally one of the corpsmen moved in with me and I told him to get me the hell out of there and back to where we had been so I could get some quinine.

Anyway, I got over the malaria and joined Bookman. There were some civilian construction people who had been digging a tunnel in the side of a hill. In fact, they had built several tunnels. One tunnel was for gasoline storage. Bookman used another one for a little aid station. I eventually joined Bookman in his aid station.

### **How was the aid station equipped?**

It wasn't equipped for major surgery but you could do minor surgery. It had a fare supply of medicines and a sterilizer. You could give inoculations and whatnot. You could carry out routine examinations and provide first aid. Anything more than that would have to be sent to the Army hospital. The tunnel wasn't large enough for bed space.

There was a lot of excitement when the Japs infiltrated behind our lines and landed on Longaskawayan Point not far from Mariveles. We sent a bunch of sailors to battle them. These sailors had no infantry training at all. They were mechanics, flight people, machinists, God knows what. The sailors were a very motley bunch. They had tried to dye their white uniforms using coffee grounds. The Japanese had taken cover in a cave along the shore. Our people finally decided to attack by boat. The officer in charge, a guy named Goodall, had mounted a machine gun on the boat. They fired at the cave and the Japanese returned fire and Goodall took a bullet in the ankle. The ragtag land force of sailors made no headway against the Japanese. As I recall, a diary was found on the body of one of the Japanese mentioning this group of sailors, who were very brave. They marched into battle yelling loudly to each other. What the Jap didn't understand was that these guys didn't know what they were getting into. Finally, two companies of Philippine scouts, who were very well organized and disciplined came in and cleaned out the Japanese in a couple of days.

Things were going bad all over. The front collapsed, and finally the troops in a Bataan threw in the towel. Bataan surrendered on April 9th. About midnight on the day of the surrender we went over to Corregidor. It was one helluva trip. There was so much confusion. I didn't know where the hell we were. There were explosions all around. Our troops were blowing up ammunition dumps all over the place. We had ammunition and gasoline stored in tunnels and they blew the tunnels. Each one was like a gigantic cannon erupting. The force was directed outwards from the tunnel. There were just tremendous explosions hurling rocks and stuff out into the bay. Meanwhile, we were on a small boat, probably a ferry, that was very slowly and carefully picking its way through a mine field between Bataan and Corregidor. The moon was up and it was kind of light.

Finally we got to Corregidor and I saw Hayes. He assigned Bookman and me to the Fourth Battalion, Fourth Marines under a MAJ Williams. Bookman, because he had joined the reserves a few weeks before I did, was the senior battalion surgeon. I was the assistant battalion surgeon. The first night we were there, Hayes assigned me to go out and join [LT] George Ferguson. He was the battalion surgeon of the First Battalion, Fourth Marines. Their area ran east of the Malinta Tunnel on beach defense. There was also a dentist there named [ ] Strangman. There was another of these bizarre sights. Here was a dentist with a dental drill operated with a treadle like these ancient sewing machines. There he was on beach defense with a dental chair and a dental drill. It was absolutely insane.

I remember getting up the next day before dawn and George Ferguson handed me a chocolate bar. I said, "Thanks very much." I asked him when breakfast was and he said, "That's it." It was impossible to set up a galley there. Every time they did, it would get blown away by shellfire.

**Had you known George Ferguson before this?**

No. That was the first time I had met him. He was a helluva nice guy. The next morning Hayes transferred me out to the Headquarters and Service Company at Government Ravine. It was out in the field. They had some foxholes and a cave dug out on the side of a hill facing away from Bataan. Meanwhile, the sailors that had come over from Bataan had been amalgamated into the Fourth Battalion, Fourth Marines. They were commanded by MAJ Williams. There must have been about 800 sailors--a sizable bunch. John Bookman was technically the battalion surgeon and I was the assistant battalion surgeon. Bookman was going to be with Williams and his bunch and I was to be bivouacked with Headquarters and Service Company of the Fourth Marines in Government Ravine. The guy in charge of that was MAJ Schaffer. While we were on Corregidor we were shelled incessantly. The Japanese had massed almost all their artillery on the Bataan side so when they laid down a barrage the shells came in so fast you couldn't count them. I heard later on that one day some 16,000 shells landed on us. How the hell they ever counted them, I'll never know because the explosions were one continuous roar.

**Did you get into the Malinta Tunnel very often?**

I went from time to time. It was interesting making a trip to Malinta Tunnel because we were usually Topside someplace. When you went to the Tunnel you had to go first to Bottomside. And down there you were out in the open. You had to run, jog, and get across an open space which was in direct view of Bataan--Mariveles--that the Japs were now occupying. If you were alone, you wondered whether they would waste a shell trying to get you. It was risky.

**Were things grim in the Tunnel?**

Malinta Tunnel was very well set up. It was a finished concrete tunnel with a bunch of laterals coming off like herring bones. There was a main tunnel and secondary tunnels branching off to the right and left. They all had different functions. The Army had headquarters as did the Navy. There was a hospital lateral. There was forced ventilation. Before the war there were tracks running into the tunnel with little carts or trolley cars. Maybe it was half the size of a subway tunnel. There was no tilework but it was concrete. People who were there stayed there. They had "tunnelitis." They rarely, if ever, came out. That includes MacArthur.

**When you did go in, did you see Hayes very often?**

I'd see him from time to time but I didn't have much to do with him and he didn't have much to do with us. He didn't come out and inspect to my knowledge. I don't know whether he worked in the hospital or not. It was an Army staff with Army doctors and nurses. I would go there for a brief visit.

But as I said, shelling was very heavy all over the rock. Once during the shelling--I was supposed to have a foxhole. I said the hell with that. I had my gear in the foxhole. You had a blanket roll. We had a little cave dug in the side of a hill so there was a little defilade and we would get into that during the shelling. Because we were on the back side of the hill, the Japanese shells would go flying over us. Once when the shelling started I started running to get over to this shelter and I passed Schaffer's foxhole. He had a foxhole with a field telephone in it. There he was as white as a sheet. I asked him what he was doing out there and why he hadn't taken cover. He said he had to stay there and man the telephone and take messages. The

message he was waiting for would come from inside the Malinta Tunnel and it would be for us to take cover. And this was what he was waiting for! I was glad that I didn't have to stay with the phone. I took off to the other side of the hill and took shelter in that little dugout which afforded some protection.

One day after a bombing, I was called to see a marine who had taken shelter in a culvert under the road. Shrapnel had passed through an open area and killed him. I pronounced him dead. The next day I was in that area trying to get some water and sure enough there was another air raid. I got into the same culvert and while I was sitting there other guys kept piling in and moving me toward the open end where the poor guy had been killed the day before. I kept thinking about the odds of whether another tree burst would hit the same place.

### **Did you see many Japanese aircraft dropping bombs?**

Not a lot. They would bomb from time to time but the bombing was not as heavy as it had been at Cavite. Corregidor had been bombed heavily before we got there. When they bombed the Middleside Barracks Berley had gotten caught in that. Most of the damage was done by the shelling and it had knocked out all our coast artillery and knocked the heavy mortars off their mounts. Headquarters and Service Company where we were bivouacked was near two large batteries, Battery Geary and Battery Crockett and they caught absolute hell. Bookman, Williams, and the Fourth Battalion were very near Geary. One day there was a tremendous explosion. It seemed that all of Corregidor was blowing up. A shell had penetrated the magazine of Battery Geary. Enormous slabs of concrete were landing all over the place. It was a coast defense battery and there was a medical officer there. His name was CAPT Lester Fox and he was badly wounded. MAJ Williams got a call for aid. He got John Bookman and they went charging over there to render whatever medical assistance they could. Fox had a chest wound and was splattered with shrapnel. Bookman eventually got a silver star for his action. Berley and I got bronze stars for Cavite and later Kobe prison hospital.

### **Do you recall the day the Japanese landed on Corregidor?**

They landed on May 5th and we held out one more day. I was still with Headquarters and Service Company bivouacked in Government Ravine. It was not along the beach front because Headquarters and Service Company was a first reserve. Our job was to back up the troops on beach defense any place the Japanese landed. They landed at night and the word came to Schaffer over his telephone. Headquarters and Service Company then formed up and marched down to Malinta Tunnel. I was to rejoin Bookman, the senior battalion surgeon, with Fourth Battalion. On the way down to the landing site, Headquarters and Service Company was caught in a heavy barrage and sustained a lot of casualties.

Meanwhile I had joined Williams and Bookman at Fourth Battalion. We waited there and then got the word to march down to Malinta Tunnel and form up there. Bookman and I were to join the medical group there also. There wasn't much we could do out on the battlefield which was about a half a mile away.

### **Had the landings been preceded by a large bombardment?**

The bombardment came when the Headquarters and Service Company tried to reinforce First Battalion. That's when the heavy shelling began. Meanwhile there was heavy action going on at the landing site. The marines were shooting up barges but the Japanese got ashore anyway. Headquarters and Service Company was trying to throw them back into the sea and contain the

landing. There were two sergeants, Haskins and Sweeney. They were two old leathernecks from way back. They used to sit around and swap stories about the good old days in Nicaragua. When the Japanese landed and occupied Battery Denver, Headquarters and Service Company tried to dislodge them. One of those guys climbed to the top of a nearby water tank and tossed hand grenades down on the Japanese. One guy climbed up the ladder and fed the other grenades. They did a lot of damage but the Japanese shot both of them.

Fourth Battalion went out but weren't able to dislodge the Japanese either. They weren't trained infantry but a ragtag group of other specialties.

While I was in the Malinta Tunnel hospital the wounded came in. Among the injured was MAJ Schaffer. He was blind and very upset. A Jap had tossed a hand grenade at him, and when it exploded, it had blown dust in his face. I examined him and his eyes seemed to be okay. I reassured him telling him it was only temporary. That calmed him down.

About this time we were getting all kinds of calls for help from a Navy communications tunnels on the east end of the island, down near the tip. They had a lot of wounded and needed help. Hayes started yelling, "Who is the junior medical officer?" He knew damn well that was me. I was always the junior. I said, "Here I am." He told me to take an ambulance and driver and go down to the Navy tunnel and take care of the wounded. He then pointed to the guy who was to be the ambulance driver. I looked at this guy and he looked at me. As soon as Hayes left, the driver looked as white as a sheet. He said, "Hey doc, we can't do that, can we?" I said we would find out. If we could do it we'd do it.

I went to MAJ Schaffer, who was not in bed in the hospital, and told him I had been ordered to take an ambulance and driver and go down to the Navy tunnel. He said, "What do you think we were trying to do? We were trying to open that goddam road but the Japs were sitting right across it." The Japs had cut the island in two and were astride the road. And you had to take that road. You couldn't leave the road because of the rough terrain on either side. It was hilly and rocky. Headquarters and Service Company had been trying to break through and couldn't. And here I was ordered to take an ambulance and break through.

So I went back to Hayes and told him it couldn't be done. In fact, our sandbagged positions at the mouth of the tunnel were already being sniped at by the Japs.

Anyway, Hayes, who had never been out of the tunnel and didn't know the geography said, "Well, I just have these orders that say you are supposed to take an ambulance and go down to the Navy tunnel and help those guys down there."

I asked him where those orders had come from. He told me they had come from the chief Army medical officer named Cooper. So I went to the colonel and told him the situation. He had never been out of the Tunnel either. This was another of these bizarre situations. The Tunnel had a red signal light. When there was an air raid or shelling the light went on indicating danger. Cooper said, "When the light goes off, then you can go out." It hadn't sunk in that the light wasn't going to go off. The Japanese had cut the roads and it was impossible to get anywhere. I told him there would be no "all clear." So he said, "You wait till the light goes off." I said, "Okay." So that was it. I went back and told Hayes and he said we would wait.

On the basis of Shaffer's report, Headquarters and Service Company was unable to break through. Williams reported that the Fourth Battalion sailors also were unable to break through. We also learned that the Japs had landed a couple of tanks on the island. On the basis of those reports, Wainwright threw in the towel and surrendered Corregidor.

**How did Wainwright notify the Japanese that he was ready to surrender?**



I think he sent a man out with a white flag and an officer who spoke Japanese. Wainwright surrendered the following morning around 11 o'clock. The shooting stopped. And I must say that was an enormous relief. It was sort of an eerie silence.

Then we were told to put our sidearms in a pile near the tunnel. Everyone turned in their .45s and rifles and we waited for the Japanese to come in.

**There must have been some feeling of dread.**

Yes. Not knowing what was going to happen. We didn't know whether they would come in with flamethrowers and whatnot and just kill everybody. But they didn't.

When they came in Hayes approached them and asked permission for me to go to the Navy tunnel. I walked down there and on the way ran into a bunch of Japanese who seemed friendly. I guess they were as relieved the shooting was over as we were. One indicated to me that he wanted my wristwatch, which, in a very friendly fashion, I gave him. I wasn't going to argue with him. They were relieving everybody of valuables.

I got down to the Navy tunnel where I found two corpsmen. One was named McDowell, the other Crawford. I didn't know McDowell very well. But I knew Crawford better. He was kind of an eight-ball. On the one hand, he did things that were very good and deserved praise and on the other hand, he did things that deserved a reprimand. On Bataan, he would take off and want to go fight the Japanese without orders.

McDowell and Crawford had 30 or 40 wounded patients. They had done a great job. The wounds were dressed. They had done as good a job as one could do under those circumstances. I checked the patients out. With my urging, we got permission from the Japanese to move these patients down to the Malinta Tunnel. By this time Japanese troops were beginning to come into the tunnel and were helping themselves to whatever was available. While I was making sick call, some of them with ailments came to me for assistance. We finally got our patients back to Malinta.

Shortly thereafter, the Japanese ordered all the troops who had been on beach defense--several thousand people--to assemble in an area not far from the eastern end of the Malinta Tunnel. That was the 92nd Garage area. It was a large paved parking lot. And all those guys were crowded down there with no shade, no shelter from the sun, no nothing. There was one water spigot for thousands of people so there was a never-ending line for water. Many of them had medical problems that needed attention--dysentery, rashes, God knows what all. The medical unit in Malinta Tunnel worked out a system in which medical officers and corpsmen took turns, going down to the garage area for 2 hours or so holding sick call on these people, taking care of an endless line of people, thousands of men. After 2 or 3 hours we were relieved by another crew of two medical officers and a few corpsmen.

**Did you have enough supplies to do any good?**

The Malinta Tunnel was well supplied. It had been set up pre-war and stocked with food, ammunition, medical supplies, etc. So there were supplies. We treated people with whatever we could. Those who were ambulatory we treated. Those who required hospitalization, we got back into the hospital. We had an effective sick call. We were rendering effective assistance to these men who needed it very badly. It was a never-ending process.

**How long were the men out there?**

Several days, maybe as long as a week. Eventually, they were all moved to Manila.

### **How far was the Garage from the Tunnel?**

About a half a mile. It wasn't far at all. Last February was the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Corregidor. I went with a group to Corregidor. There was a limited number of accommodations. There was a resort with a small hotel. Attached to the hotel were about a dozen cabanas. My wife and I were in one of these cabanas. It was just lovely just looking out at the water, a real lovely tropical scene with palm trees. I noticed something about the beach that seemed a little odd. There were broken pieces of concrete on the beach. As I sat there, a drink in one hand and my feet up on the railing, it suddenly dawned on me. This was the 92nd Garage! The cabanas were on the very same site. The 92nd Garage had been transformed into a tropical resort. It was like swords beaten into plowshares.

Anyway, the Japanese moved everyone over to Manila. Hayes came by, as usual and said, "Who is the junior medical officer?" And I said, "That's still me." He told me that I was to stay behind because a detachment of about 300 POWs had been selected by the Japanese for a work detail to clean up Corregidor. What I mean is they were to salvage for the Japanese everything worth salvaging. And this work detail needed a couple of medical officers. Hayes was eager to get off to Manila because that's where everybody else was going.

### **What was our impression of Hayes as an officer?**

It was mixed. Unlike the medical officers who had remained in Manila and allowed themselves to be captured, Hayes had gone with the marines, which was very appropriate. But once he got to Corregidor, he never got outside the Malinta Tunnel. He didn't inspect or offer advice. He was a blustering kind of a guy. Yet there were some very nice things about him. This aspect of the man came up later. The POWs the Japanese took to Manila, eventually went on to work camps or Cabanatuan, the main POW camp on Luzon. The Army and Navy medical people, except for me, went to Bilibid where they joined the Canacao Hospital people. These people may have been a waste of a good hospital when the shooting was going on but, once the shooting stopped, the Canacao staff was invaluable for taking care of POWs. Here was this well organized, well staffed, well supplied hospital unit ready to do business. And they functioned very effectively under those circumstances. Hayes, meanwhile, was doing a very credible job interviewing people and writing histories on what they had done. He interviewed me and a bunch of other guys. That was a most appropriate and worthwhile project. I also understand he did good work on the way up to Japan when the *Oryoku Maru* was sunk. So when you ask, what did I think of him, my feelings are mixed. Remember, he almost got me killed! He should have known what the situation was like on that last day and where the Japanese were but he didn't.

### **When did you get to Bilibid?**

I didn't get to Bilibid right away. I remained on Corregidor until December 10th. I was there with Tommy Hewlett. We were taking care of the work detail that had remained behind. We didn't lose a man. On the other hand, we couldn't accept all the credit. Rations weren't bad because the food supplies on Corregidor were still there even though the Japanese were taking some of it. One of the first things I did was to set up some beds for our patients. I went to the Japanese doctor and told him we needed food. He told me to see the Japanese quartermaster who gave me a sack of rice and a case of sardines and some flour. It was fantastic! It was incredible! This was a tremendous haul. About a week later I went back a second time and got another sack of rice and batch of food. So we were pretty well supplied.

In this work detail I got to know some of the Army people. The officers were all West Pointers. I really admired them.

There's another thing I should tell you about. Before Corregidor surrendered, the entire Philippine treasury had been transferred there, including all the gold and silver. The gold was shipped out on submarines but the silver was dumped into the bay. Eventually, the Japanese came around looking for the gold and silver but couldn't find the gold. They collected some Navy divers--POWs--and they were put under a Japanese civilian who was supposed to salvage the silver. The divers went down and found the silver in crates. I learned this later from some of the divers. They would go down and kick in the sides of the crates and scatter the silver all over the ocean bottom. The Jap civilian, who was on one side of the boat, would send down a bucket, and the divers would fill it with silver. On the other side of the boat they sent up another bucket of silver to the Americans. The Jap civilian was a pretty good guy and didn't seem to mind that the divers were taking their cut.

**What did the divers think they were going to do with the silver once they got it?  
How were they going to spend it?**

I was getting to that. One day, one of the divers came to me in the sick bay at the hospital and said, "Hey, doc, I've got these pesos." And he showed me a sock full of Philippine silver pesos about the size of a silver dollar. And they were all black because they had been sitting in salt water. "Is there anything you can do to get the black off them?" I dipped them in nitric acid and they came out shiny like newly minted silver. In gratitude, they gave me a bunch of these shiny pesos. Pretty soon these pesos began showing up in the Philippine economy because the Japanese were using worthless paper scrip. We were beginning to have an impact on the economy and pretty soon the Kempei [secret police] came around wanting to know where these shiny pesos were coming from. I read an article later that said about eight and half million dollars had been dumped in the bay and the divers recovered about four million. The article said that there were about four million pesos left there and are available to anybody who wants to go down to get them. The Philippine government would, of course, get a 50 percent cut.

I don't recall that anybody got into any real trouble over all this. Even though the salvage operation went on we decided to lay low. It as a strange kind of business.

On December 10th I was sent to Bilibid. There was nothing luxurious about that place. You couldn't see much of what went on outside and it was very confining. It used to be an old jail so it was surrounded by walls. I went to Bilibid last November while I was in the Philippines. I recognized the general layout. There were civilian prisoners there at the time and, I must say, we kept the place better than they do now.

When I got there then, there was the entire medical staff from Canacao. They had set up an intact hospital unit with a junior and senior staff, corpsmen, etc. And they were functioning.

Bilibid was an intermediate stop for people being sent to Japan or work camps. It also served as a collection center for sick POWs from work camps covering a wide area.

When I got there I joined the group. I had some training in neurology so I served as a neurologist. We took care of all kinds of illnesses. Among the major diseases were the deficiency diseases. Burning feet was at the top of the list but we also saw pellagra, scurvy, night blindness. The blindness was a difficult thing to deal with. Al Smith [LT Alfred L.] had optic neuritis which led to optic atrophy. Al Smith was one of my patients. He also had burning feet and it was terrible. The pain was awful

**Wasn't burning feet a form of beriberi?**

A lot of people called it dry beriberi. I didn't think it was dry beriberi. I didn't think it was beriberi at all. I didn't think so because I gave some of my patients thiamin and it didn't do anything. On the other hand, when the nutrition improved there was improvement. When I gave B<sub>2</sub> for pellagra there was rapid improvement. For all the other deficiency diseases, vitamins helped, but for burning feet it didn't. It's possible that the burning feet was a form of neuritis and neural changes didn't respond as rapidly to therapeutic agents. But even so, burning feet did respond to improvements in diet.

**Did you get good response with wet beriberi when you administered thiamin?**

I don't recall seeing too many people with the wet variety. A lot of people had ankle edema and it's not clear whether or not this was wet beriberi or protein deficiency. One of the real problems from a medical standpoint is that in these circumstances medical studies could not be carried out.

**Did you have a good supply on hand there in Bilibid?**

Not a large supply but there was some available.

**Had they brought instruments from Canacao?**

Yes. So they were able to function, to operate. The Canacao crew really rendered meritorious service.

**Was there any friction that developed between the Canacao people and you folks who arrived later?**

No, none at all. When I came I became part of the group. I was Navy. They expected me to show up, and I showed up and was immediately put to work taking care of a ward.

**Was there a difference the way the hospital was run once Hayes took over from [CDR Lea] Sartin?**

I don't think so.

**Because bilibid was a transfer point for labor parties, the patients you saw were in pretty poor shape.**

Yes. The major problem we had to deal with were starvation diseases.

**What would a typical day been like for you?**

Not much different than it would have been for me in a civilian hospital. Of course, there was getting up in the morning to tenko, or roll call. I would make rounds, see people in consultation. Those were the main activities. In the evening, there were some library books around so we could read. For the time I was Bilibid it was possible to buy some food--small items, not much. We had some ersatz coffee the Filipinos made by roasting grains or whatnot. We also had some Filipino tobacco. Later on those sources dried up. Occasionally the Japanese would show us a propaganda movie or some American films. I ran classes for the corpsmen teaching elementary chemistry. Later on, the Japanese didn't like the idea of us teaching people.

**How long were you at Bilibid?**

I was there from December 10, 1942 until October 2, 1943. While I was in Bilibid I got to be very friendly with John Bookman who came over with me from San Francisco. And Fred Berley, and George Ferguson.

**You had met these men on Corregidor.**

Yes. We continued our friendship. We went to Japan together but had to leave George Ferguson behind.

I recall one incident that might have had some interesting consequences. One of the officers, Clyde Welch, came by to see me and Bookman one day. The Japanese had wanted to know who among us was Jewish. Welch said that he and the other officers had talked about this among themselves and decided that Bookman and I could be anything we wanted and they would back us up. So he asked us what we wanted to be. And that's what they would tell the Japanese.

**That whole thing must have sounded pretty ominous.**

It sounded a bit ominous but not terribly so because at that time we didn't know what was happening in Germany. This was 1942. Like a dope and with a lot of braggadocio, I said, "My people have been Jews now for at least 3,000 years so being Jewish a little while longer was all right with me. Bookman chimed in and said the same stupid thing. Nothing more was ever said about it. We figured that Welch must have had enough sense to tell the Japs something other than what these two dopes had told him. I don't think the Japanese cared one way or another. They discriminated equally. They thought all white people were... And that's interesting too. Once a Japanese officer came along during the height of the Japanese conquests. He began bragging about how they had conquered Hong Kong, Singapore, the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, India, etc. "What do you think of us now?" And then he asked individuals: "What is your background?" And the man would answer, "Well, I'm Scotch-Irish," or something like that. Someone else would say, "I'm Swiss," and someone else said, "Polish, Italian," and so on. And then with a sneer he said, "All Americans are mongrels."

**A highly racist culture.**

Yes. That was their attitude. They were very arrogant. Anyway, on October 2, 1943 a draft was made up to be shipped to Cabanatuan. The junior officers like Bookman, Berley, Ferguson, and I were to go. The idea was that the senior ranks would remain in Bilibid.

**Was there some choice in the matter?**

I think the Japanese came to one of the senior officers like Hayes and told him to send so many people to Cabanatuan. Not surprisingly, the junior people always were picked. Maybe there was some justification in this decision. After all, the senior people were specialists of one kind or another and the junior people were not specialists.

**So, in a sense, you were dispensable.**

Maybe. But on the other hand, none of the senior people ever left. They hung together and clung to Bilibid as long as they could until it was too late, and that's why they died. They were shipped out on the *Oryoku Maru*.

Anyway, we went to Cabanatuan.

**What did you find when you got there?**

By the time we got there, that was a well organized institution. The Army was in command of everything. They had a bunch of barracks there. There was barbed wire around the place and the Jap guards were on the outside. The medical setup was under Army control and there were no Navy people in medical roles. When we got there we weren't even briefed. We were the same as any other prisoner. We stuck together and were assigned to a barracks.

**Then they pretty much left you to your own devices then.**

Not to our own devices. We were left as part of the work detail. We had no medical duties; we were just like the rest of the prisoners. The Army people didn't even bother to talk to us.

Anyway, Bookman, Berley, Ferguson, and I kept a bridge game going that we had started way back and eventually I lost. Eventually, when we got back I owed everyone a steak dinner. While Berley was on the wood detail, I spent some time on the farm, which was terrible. It was backbreaking labor picking camote tops, Philippine sweet potatoes. You had to pick with your head down and bottom up all day long in the broiling hot tropical sun. You were whacked for not working hard or fast enough or sometimes for no reason at all. You piled the camotes on a big stretcher which, by the end of the day, weighed about 600 pounds. Four men would carry this stretcher, one at each handle, about a mile back to camp. Once we got it back to camp, the camotes went to the Japanese and they gave us the vines. We gave the vines to the cook and the cook would discard them as garbage because they were inedible.

**So you weren't getting any of the camotes at all.**

No. There might have been a token amount.

**What were you eating then?**

Mostly rice and at that time it wasn't too bad. We occasionally got some greens. Usually we got lugao, which was sort of a porridge made with rice. That's what we got for breakfast. Later in the day we got boiled rice with some greens thrown in with it. It was always white rice. Once in a while a bit of fish was thrown in. The quantity was sufficient at the time to keep people going. Occasionally, maybe once a year, we got red cross packages and what the Japanese didn't steal we'd get. Those packages were extremely valuable and they helped greatly.

**But they didn't last long, did they?**

You could stretch it out. Nobody gobbled it all up. Anyway, I worked on the farm and later, the carpentry detail building huts and things like that. I made out pretty well on that because I acted as the interpreter on this detail. I knew some pidgin Japanese, a little more than the other guys. As the interpreter, I didn't have to work as hard as the other guys. The Japanese guard in charge of the detail was disgusted with me because my Japanese was very limited. And then I went to an airfield and did hand labor. We had no machines, just rakes, spades, and whatnot. I spent a lot of time on that airfield wandering around from one spot to another. I wasn't in a hurry to build airfields for the Japanese. I goofed off as much as I could possibly get by with.

Somewhere along the line, I learned that a detail was being made up to go to Japan. We would be setting up some kind of a Red Cross hospital. I recall that there was some choice of

whether to stay at Cabanatuan or go to Japan. The choice was that the Japanese only took people who were relatively healthy. They were very very careful about importing diseases into Japan. One of the things they didn't want to import was amoebic dysentery. And a lot of the POWs had it. George Ferguson had it so he couldn't go. He had to stay in Cabanatuan. I remember thinking at the time that I could go to Japan or maybe I could stay. How would I stay? By fouling the stool with amoebic dysentery. I thought about that and figured it would be better to go to Japan. These guys who wanted to stick around might pay a price for doing so. It wouldn't be like the Japanese to leave prisoners around while the Americans came up and recaptured the Philippines. They would probably ship the POWs out or kill them. Or the POWs would get caught in a crossfire between the Japanese and Americans and get shot up that way.

**Were you at that point where you were thinking seriously about the Americans coming back? Where there any signs that this was about to happen?**

Well there were bits of news that leaked in--rumors. The rumors either came from the outside from the Filipinos who occasionally sent things into camp. Otherwise the rumors were started by people who had radios. Of course, anybody who built a radio would keep it very secret and not tell anybody. If the Japanese caught you they would probably kill you. Nevertheless, anyone who had one would circulate the news as a rumor. If the rumors checked out with each other or with news that came in through the Filipinos, we then knew something about what was going on.

I thought it was a better deal to get out of there. We all had faith--there was no doubt in our minds that the United States would win this war against Japan. There were always these rumors that were concocted and circulated about that reinforcements would arrive someday. But we had no doubt that they would arrive eventually. Then again, we were so confident because we didn't know the extent of the damage at Pearl Harbor. I remember in Bilibid Carey Smith used to lie on his cot and he would intone every day constantly, "We'd all be free in '43. No more war in '44. Hardly a man alive in '45."

**Wasn't there something like "Golden Gate in '48?"**

I don't think he got up to Golden Gate. Anyway, the guys who wanted to stick around at Bilibid and Cabanatuan, okay, let them. We'll go while the going is good.

We left Cabanatuan on a detail to go to Japan on February 26, 1944 and we were sent to Bilibid. On March 5th we went aboard the Kenawa? (spell) Maru which left Manila on the 7th. We were down in the hold of the ship. It was crowded but not impossible. The food we had was soup which wasn't too bad. It had some greens in it and occasionally some meat. It was enough to keep us going.

**Was Ernie [Irvin] on the ship with you?**

Yes. We arrived in Formosa about a week later on the 12th of March and then left for Japan. According to Ernie, on one of his trips topside, he saw the convoy attacked by an American submarine and saw a Japanese cruiser sunk. But the ship we were on was not attacked, which was very fortunate. We finally got to Moji on the southern island on March 24. Aboard ship, they gave rectal examinations on everybody--put a probe up everybody's behind to take a smear checking for amoebic dysentery.

We were supposed to go to a POW hospital in Kobe but apparently it wasn't ready at the time so we were shipped to a work camp at Tsumori. I wasn't there very long. An American was senior officer there. He stayed in camp and so did I.

**Had you brought your instruments with you on the ship?**

No, I had no instruments or anything at all. I thought I was doing pretty well having some clothing. Remember my clothing was constantly being blown away. When the Navy Yard dispensary burned everything I and Berley had burned. We just got out of there with the clothes on our backs. When I got to Bataan and ended up in a foxhole, my clothing was riddled with shrapnel. So I had to get reoutfitted again. And then later on Kobe was bombed and my gear went up again. So just keeping my clothing was a problem.

We went to a hospital called Ichioka under the seats of an athletic stadium. It was an impossible place, an airless, lightless dungeon. There was a British medical officer named Jackson and some starving bed patients there lying on the floor. They were in terrible condition. They had been brought there to die. What they got to eat were the sweepings off the floor of a warehouse where the Japanese military stored their rice. The Japanese were quite vicious. Jackson would complain about the people not getting enough food and the Japanese would beat him up for it. When Berley got there, he also got beaten up. That was standard procedure.

Finally we were shipped to the POW hospital in Kobe. It had once been an American missionary school before the war. It was on the side of a hill on the edge of the city. In terms of its environment, it was a rather pleasant place. The Japanese doctor in charge of the camp was a man called Ohashi. He was a decent sort. He had been a civilian reservist.

The staff included a British lieutenant commander, a Dutch medical officer, a Dutch pharmacist, a couple of Dutch corpsmen, Berley, Bookman, myself, Stan Smith, and some American corpsmen. Initially, things were pretty good. We got patients from the surrounding work camps. The hospital really had been set up as a showplace to impress people from other embassies and the Red Cross. The British officer's name was John Page.

We took care of British, Australian, American, Dutch POWs. Berley worked as a surgeon. He was the senior American medical officer. Bookman was internal medicine. And I was neurology and psychiatry even though I hadn't had any formal training in psychiatry.

There was an extraordinary sight there. There was a fellow who had had his legs amputated and got around on a dolly with wheels or casters under it. There was another fellow who was blind. He used to pull the amputee on the dolly. The guy on the platform would be the eyes and the blind guy would be the horsepower pulling the other around with a rope. This symbiotic relationship was really very touching. The blind fellow seemed to be in pretty good physical condition to me. I decided to have a look at his eyes. Externally they looked good. They weren't clouded. There were no corneal opacities. But he sure as hell looked and acted like a blind man, no question about it. But because the cornea looked clear, I thought I would have a look at his retinas. But I had no instruments. I had Ohashi get me an ophthalmoscope. He dug me up one which, I'm sure, was a 19th century instrument. With a modern ophthalmoscope you shine a light into his pupil and look into the eye. With this one you stood about 3 feet away. It was no more than a mirror. I had never used anything that antique before but finally I was able to look into that fellow's eyes. Everything looked normal and pink, no atrophy. The optic nerve heads looked good. I couldn't see why he was blind. Then I checked his optic reflexes and they were normal. There was no neurological basis or ophthalmological basis for the blindness. This must be hysteria!



I didn't know much about hysteria except what I had read about it. In the worst cases, you hypnotized the patient. So that's what I did. Sure enough, after about three or four sessions, I restored his vision. It was an absolute miracle!

**What types of things did you pursue when you got him in a hypnotic state?**

I assured him that his eyes were normal and that he would be able to see once he woke up.

**What was his reaction when he came out of his state and suddenly he was seeing.**

He was delighted. The double amputee now had a problem because this guy now stopped being his horse.

**How did the Japanese react to this?**

The Japanese scratched their heads. They just couldn't believe it. They thought this was some kind of miracle because they were also convinced that this guy was blind. And Ohashi was puzzled by it. He asked me if I thought that kind of condition could be treated with electric shock. Visitors came to the camp to see this and I enjoyed the reputation of being a miracle worker.

We had several other patients with hysterical disabilities. They were mostly paralyses. They too responded to hypnosis. I had never done this before, but being a neurologist, I could check reflexes and rule out any organic basis for the condition. then I could resort to hypnosis. And it worked.

After the blind guy recovered he went out to a work camp and after awhile and then he came back with his blindness. So he needed another shot of hypnosis.

**Did you do it a second time?**

Yes. He was a pretty good subject.

**Were you ever able to determine what the traumatic event was that made him lose his sight?**

No. Everything was traumatic. Just the situation he was in was traumatic. He was trading off the blindness for the rigors and conditions in the work camps. Being blind, he wouldn't be sent out on work details.

**What do you recall about the Americans coming back?**

As I remember it, the bombings initially began at night. Air raid sirens would go off and we would see search lights in the sky. The night bombers were bombing the port area. And then in May there was a flight of about 400 planes that bombed part of Kobe, not where we were. In June of that year--'45--a flight of 400 B-29s came over. That was a sight. It was a clear day and they were up very high, maybe 30,000 feet. All you could see were these little white shapes. As I recall, they were flying in groups of three in overlapping paths. The Japanese guards came out yelling "Binijaku! Binijaku! This means 29. They knew they were B-29s. The guards had been infantry in the southern islands and seen some action because they were pretty jumpy. One grabbed my arm and hung on to me as if I were to protect him. I don't know what he expected me to do, yell up to the planes?

Anyway, those planes were an awesome sight! It was awesome because the planes flew majestically in straight lines as though the sky had been laid out with a ruler. They flew in

flights of three, overlapping and as they flew they covered the city. We saw them dropping what appeared to be leaflets except that the leaflets glinted metallic in the sun, fluttering down in showers. They were incendiary bombs. As soon as they hit the earth they blazed up like magnesium flares. Interspersed with them seemed to be larger bombs which I figured were 500-pound napalm bombs. Unlike the May raid, this time the bombers flew directly over us. I ran outside the building with my gear and then back inside to evacuate patients. The bombs had already hit the hospital and fires were everywhere. Sure enough, the building I was in burned to the ground and my gear, which wasn't far enough from the building, burned too.

**So, your fourth set of clothes was not gone.**

That's right.

**I've talked to some veterans who told me that when they looked up at the planes, they were pretty pleased. They weren't even thinking of their own safety as much as happiness that the Yanks were back.**

We were ecstatic because this was the first time... Here we were beneath the feet of the Japanese. We were nothing, absolutely defenseless. We lived day to day at the whim of the Japanese. There was nothing we could do to get at them. And then suddenly the B-29s came, giving them hell. These guys up in those planes were our buddies. We had heard from the beginning when we were on Bataan and Corregidor all MacArthur's rhetoric about the thousands of men, planes, and ships that were on the way to rescue us and how the reinforcements were coming. And that was all nonsense. But now here they were, this magnificent spectacle. Sure bombs were landing on us but it was almost as if we didn't mind because the Japanese were catching hell. There was no doubt about that and to see them cringing in fear was a tremendous sight. At long last, this was the first visible sign that help was on the way.

**This was the big raid in June.**

Yes. They were both big, the one in May and the one in June. But this one bombed the whole city including us. It completely wiped out our part of the city. One of the large napalm bombs hit a building where we had TB patients and it went up in a sheet of flame. We lost about six patients in that building and 20 others throughout the camp died afterward of burns, not all in that building. Even now, every once in awhile, after I lock the door on my car, I wonder if I really locked it and go back and check. At Kobe I went back to make sure we got all the patients out of the building. And sure enough, we found a guy with a cast on his leg cheerfully waiting for somebody to get him out of there. One side of the ward was on fire, and I got this fellow on my back and got out. One of the people I looked for was an Australian doctor who was a major in the medical corps who had come down with TB. His name was Ackroyd and he had also been at Ichioka. But they had already gotten him out.

After that raid we were really in rough shape. Berley and Bookman evacuated some stretcher cases. I had the walking wounded, people who could manage without being carried.

The city was ablaze. About 60,000 people died in that raid. I don't remember where I got that figure. It was carpet bombing that Curtis LeMay had instituted. The buildings were close together and very flammable.

Anyway, we evacuated the burning hospital grounds and began making a march through what was left of the city.

**Did you see many Japanese victims?**

We saw some and I told my corpsmen, "We take care of them as well as we take care of our own. Let's make sure we do this in a very noticeable fashion." I said this because I thought the Japanese would blame us for the bombing and we would be lynched. So we took care of the Japanese as we took care of our own people, and they were grateful. They recognized the difference between their attackers and the prisoners. There were no reprisals at all. On the other hand, when our planes were shot down, I understand that they beheaded any fliers that got into their hands.

We marched through the center of town, which was a smoking ruin. You couldn't see any buildings but I knew it was the center of town because I could see the confluence of the streetcar tracks. They all converged in a central hub.

You don't hear much about the bombing of Kobe and I've never understood why. The firebombing of Tokyo and Osaka were well documented.

**You went through town looking for another place to set up a hospital.**

We were guided to a place called Maruyama. There must have been animals there at one time, maybe cavalry horses, because the place was infested with fleas. It was awful. We couldn't sleep at night so we finally decided that the only way to defeat the fleas was to sleep on a table with the table legs in cans filled with water so there were moats around each leg. This kept the fleas from crawling up the legs. It seemed to help a little. Then the fleas would get into the blankets and we'd have to either steam them or pick them out one by one. It was a real mess.

After the bombing our food rations dropped precipitously. The Japanese would come around and say, "Look, people who work get full rations, people who don't work get half rations." And the patients were starving anyway. Most had nutritional diseases. Because we medical staff were working they decided we would get full rations. We decided to split our rations with the patients. That worked out to something like 800 calories a day. We figured that with the rations we were getting--800 calories--we would not last beyond November 1945. We'd all probably be dead of starvation. Then we began to hear from the newspapers and smuggled radio reports that the Americans were on Okinawa and would soon invade Japan. We figured that's great. No one around here is going to last till the end of 1945 so it wouldn't do us much good.

**What month was this that you were doing your calculations?**

July.

**Were you getting rice at this point or just barley?**

We were getting a mixture of rice, barley, and millet seeds.

**A month later the atomic bomb was dropped. Did you know about it right away?**

We got little bits of news from one of the English language papers that were smuggled in, either the *Minuchi Shimbun* or the *Yasahi Shimbun*. One fine day in August we heard about the bomb. On the front page center top was a column about 4 inches long which cautioned people about the danger of a single plane. It said that the enemy had dropped a new type of bomb and until the effects of this bomb could be evaluated by the military, it was advised that Japanese civilians take shelter even if they saw only one plane. That was the response to the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima. And people talk about British understatement!

Not long after we heard music on the radio and someone jabbering in Japanese. That was the emperor speaking announcing the surrender of Japan. And shortly after that Ohashi called Page, Berley, Bookman, and myself and, looking somewhat surprised, announced that the war was over. I remember Page put his hand to his forehead and staggered back when he heard this.

Ohashi then said we were no longer prisoners and were free to go. The Japanese didn't what the hell to do then so they did nothing. There were no restrictions on us and they didn't impose any. The men went out and scrounged around and located a warehouse where they found where powdered eggs had been stored. They brought the powdered eggs back to camp and we cooked up some scrambled eggs. Everybody got a terrific case of diarrhea. It must have been infected with salmonella or something like it. I don't think we got sick simply because we were starving. However, there were no serious consequences from this.

Then planes began flying over the camp. First they were carrier based fighters. The pilots would make low passes over the hospital and drop a can of peaches or something which was really stupid because the thing landed without a parachute. If it hit a building it put a hole in it. But the sentiment was appreciated. Then they began parachuting food and supplies to us. We had to be careful about those because some of the parachutes didn't open. If they hit anybody they would kill them on the spot. After a while these airborne packages were becoming a menace and we had to wave them off.

I think we got word over the radio that MacArthur was supposed to come in with the fleet by around the 22nd of August and a truce or something would be signed. And so I began thinking of the situation we were in. I figured they would come in and wouldn't know anything about where the camps were. They certainly wouldn't know where we are. And here we have a lot of sick people dying constantly. We had to get them out of the camp.

The obvious thing to do was to go to Tokyo and get in touch with the fleet and arrange for air evacuation to hospitals. I spoke to Fred Berley and John Bookman about it. Fred was all for it. So was Stan Smith, the dentist. John said he'd love to go with us but that he'd been sleeping on his table the night before and fell off and sprained his ankle. But Berley, Stan Smith, and I decided to go. We went to the railroad station.

**By that time you already knew enough Japanese to be able to ask how to get to Tokyo. Or how did you communicate?**

We could speak some pidgin Japanese and they could speak some pidgin English. Between the two we could make ourselves understood. According to what Berley told you in his oral history, we had been waiting for some time until someone came along who spoke English and he directed us. We got aboard the train to Tokyo and that was very interesting. The train was mobbed with Japanese troops in very good condition. They were healthy, husky, and in fine spirits. These were not beaten soldiers. I don't know whether they were recruits or what but they were a bunch of tough looking characters. And they were happy the war was over. And there they were in these cars two and three deep. Nobody bothered us as we piled in.

**Did they look at you somewhat peculiarly? After all, your clothing must have been in tatters by that time.**

Yes, except that I had a new pair of pants. One of the British patients had been a tailor and with some light canvas, he sewed me a pair of pants. We all had Navy caps which we had hung on to. Fred had one with a blue top and Navy insignia on it. I had one with a white top with Navy insignia on it. Stan Smith had an overseas cap. Oh yes, we were an odd looking bunch.

The primary goal of our trip was really to get those patients evacuated. The secondary goal was to see the fleet. Berley said in his oral history that we saw the fleet in Yokohama. I don't remember that at all. He swears by it but I don't remember it. I think he must have been seeing some Japanese ships.

We got up to Tokyo but when we got there we didn't know where to go. We knew then that the fleet was not in. It had been delayed by a typhoon. We had to stay someplace so we decided to stay at the Imperial Hotel. I forget how we got there.

**Dr. Berley said that you got a ride on a Japanese Army truck.**

Yes. I think that's correct. When we got to the hotel we went up to the desk and said we wanted a room. The desk clerk said in effect, "Who are you?" "We are American naval officers," and we said that the Navy would pay for the room. The desk clerk didn't say anything. He went about his business and gave us a room even though he was eying us suspiciously. I mentioned how we were dressed. We also told him we wanted dinner set up.

**Did you have money with you?**

No. We were charging it.

**I recall Dr. Berley saying that when you left the camp you had some kind of money with you to buy tickets on the train.**

Yes we did. But not to pay for the hotel. We told the clerk to put it on our tab. Charge it to the U.S. Navy! Anyway, he sent us up to this room and sure enough, food came up. It was great. Apparently after we had gotten to the room, the clerk called Japanese intelligence and pretty soon we had visitors who asked us who we were and what we were doing there. We told them that we were American naval officers and that we had come to Tokyo to see MacArthur and tell him about the location of our camp and get the sick evacuated. They were really quite polite. They said, "Well, you're here and we understand your mission but for your own safety we suggest that you stay in the hotel and not go outside because some of the Japanese people are very upset about the end of the war and so on.

They didn't say that we were under house arrest but that's what it amounted to. When they had left, I wandered out into the corridor and the door to the next room was open. There was a Japanese fellow there sitting at a table loaded with electronic equipment. He looked at me with some surprise. I admit that I was a little startled. I then went back into the room and told my companions that this guy was listening in on us. The room had a little balcony. I suggested that we go out there to talk. We were beginning to feel a little hemmed in here. We were being interrogated and bugged.

Out on the balcony we could see that there was no fleet in and that we were all alone. When we looked up in the sky there was a carrier plane buzzing around and that was very encouraging.

The interrogators then came back and one of them, I think a captain, was kind of snotty. He asked who we were and so on and we replied that we were American naval medical officers. He spoke pretty good English when he said, "So you're POWs." I got really mad and pointed my finger at him. "You sonofabitch. You lost the goddam war and when you see an American naval officer you speak to him with respect. Otherwise, I'll see to it that you're hung from the highest lamp post in Tokyo."

### **That must have felt good.**

What felt good was that the man turned white and ran from the room scared. From this blustering character who tried to walk over a bunch of beaten, downtrodden POWs who had been stepped all over by everybody and he was pulling this stuff on us again. The others then began to mollify us. It was sort of the good cop--bad cop routine. And he was the bad cop. They kept asking us over and over why we wanted to see MacArthur. And we told them over and over the same thing. Then they said, "Well MacArthur isn't here, the fleet isn't here yet. You really don't have to wait. Why don't we give him the message for you." We said nothing doing. We told them that we would stay until MacArthur came. Finally, they asked us if they could bring someone from the Swiss embassy or consulate and we could give our message to him. The Swiss would then transmit the message for us.

We agreed to that and they brought the Swiss official to us. He seemed concerned about the situation. He told us that he would pass the message on to MacArthur. He advised us that once he passed on the message that we should go back. He was really encouraging us to return.

I forgot to mention that at one point, one of the Japs interrogating us asked us where we were from and we told him. He then asked us if anyone knew that we were here. I looked this guy right in the eye and I could see the wheels in his head moving as if he were thinking, "If no one knows you are here we could knock you guys off and then you wouldn't be any trouble to us." We told him there were 800 people in the camp and everyone knew we were here. Of course, we were bluffing. No one knew where we were.

Once the Swiss official assured us that he would get our message to MacArthur, we agreed to go back. The Japs almost heaved a huge sigh of relief. They delegated a Kempeitai to escort us back to the camp and he went with us on the train. I talked with him and he said that everyone was glad we were going back. I asked him why. He then revealed what was on their minds. They were really worried that we would get to see MacArthur and fill him with horror stories about atrocities and so on and that MacArthur would be so incensed that he would make the surrender terms difficult for the Japanese. They wanted the best terms they could get and they figured that we would louse things up. Somehow we would throw a wrench into the machine. And MacArthur would really be angry because he had walked out on us on Corregidor and he would be feeling guilty about that. And the guy added that if things were made more difficult, he himself would have to commit suicide.

He also gave us some indication what would have happened if the war had not ended. He said that Tokyo Bay was heavily fortified and there were about 2 million men under arms. A landing there would have been a horrendous business. I didn't know what the situation was on Kyushu where the first landings were to take place, but on Honshu, near Tokyo, that would have been a terribly bloody mess. I'm sure they would have fought to the death. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was probably the best thing that could have happened to put an end to the war.

### **What happened when you got back to the camp?**

Well Page was a little pissed off that we had gone. By then I think they had moved us to a Red Cross hospital where they had some nurses. I'm sure this was so things would look nice when the troops arrived.

Not very long afterward, a rescue team came in and began to evacuate people. I went off with a group to Tokyo where I was put up for the night aboard a battleship. I think it was the *Idaho*.

**So you think your message was really delivered?**

Yes, I think it was delivered because we got out fairly soon after that. Berley and Bookman were sent back aboard ship. I was flown out to Guam and then to Honolulu. I remember meeting a fellow on the plane who had come out of a POW camp. He was an officer in submarines. I talked to him but he didn't want to talk. He was deep in a brooding depression.

When I got to Honolulu I realized that they were rushing to get us back but I wasn't in that big a hurry. I had to somehow acclimate to all this and the flying itself was stressful. I spent a few days in San Francisco at the hospital and then they flew me across country to New York. When we were over the middle of the country, the pilot announced that he was having a little trouble with one of his engines. I thought, after all we'd been through, now to end up in an airplane crash. That's too much! But somehow we got back without further difficulty.

I was not regular Navy and I wasn't going to stay in the Navy. I wanted to get on with my civilian career as soon as possible.

**How was your health at that time?**

It wasn't too bad. I was tired. I had night blindness but my daytime vision was not affected.

What was very difficult was trying to reintegrate back into civilian society and pick up my professional career. You never hear much about the stress of reintegrating. Before I left to go into the Navy, I had just been appointed chief resident in neurology at the hospital on Welfare Island so my career was cut short. I went back and saw my old chief. Through him, I got to be a resident at the Neurological Institute of New York which was the leading neurological institution in the country.

**Did you have any other problems? I know that many of the other POWs over the years didn't have the kind of care they get today. They were pretty much thrown back into society without any preparation and forced to deal with the stresses of what they had been through on their own.**

I should answer this with a story. No one really understood the background I came from. To them I looked like just another guy. But I was very different. I'd just come from a different environment. While I was at the Neurological Institute, which was part of Presbyterian Hospital, there was an emergency team--a disaster unit. One day an alarm sounded and the disaster team was called. I saw one of the neurosurgical residents running through the corridor. I asked him what was going on. He looked at me very agitated and said, "Didn't you hear. A building on the street up here collapsed! We're being called to help." I looked at him in amazement and said, "Only one building?" This is what I mean by being in a different world. I can understand getting excited if it were an attack on New York City, but all that excitement over one building.

This was an indication of my frame of reference. I recall another incident. I was having lunch with one of the nurses. She was apologizing for the quality of the coffee we were having. I got really agitated. I said, "It's real coffee isn't it?" I hadn't seen real coffee for years.

When I was finishing my residency, I applied to the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. The interviewer asked me about my experiences. He wanted to know whether there were any lasting effects. I said, "Before the war there was a different feeling about permanence. You look around you. You look at New York City. The buildings look really solid and permanent. But they don't to me. I've seen Osaka and Kobe wiped out. People don't live forever. People get

killed and die. Cities get killed and die. Nothing lasts forever." This analyst looked at me like I was really nuts. She couldn't understand my frame of reference.

Once when I was in Kobe, Ohashi told us that he had read in the newspaper that an airplane had crashed into the Empire State Building and he wanted to know if that was really possible. Could a building be so tall that an airplane could crash into it? He was incredulous. I thought it was funny and I laughed. Of course it wasn't a laughing matter. A plane had flown into the Empire State Building. I thought that now people back home at least would understand what happens in a war. The states had been absolutely untouched. Manila had been wiped out, whole cities had been wiped out. Kamikazes had destroyed ships and killed hundreds of men. The only catastrophe the homefront had suffered was this one plane crashing. That's why it seemed laughable to me.